

LATER STORY OF THE RELIEF CONGREGATIONS

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I

IN this paper it is proposed to follow the fortunes of the congregations which were formed and attached themselves to the Relief cause. Up to the time of the union of the United Secession Church with the Synod of Relief in 1847 there had been in all 136 congregations in the fellowship of the Relief Church. Of these 118 entered the Union. The reason for the absence of the others was not opposition to union. It was that they had already ceased to exist. Some of them indeed were really still-born, never had more than a name to live. One of them had not even that—Stockbridge, Edinburgh. The building of a church was begun, but before it was finished the building was sold to the Seceders, and the congregation expired.

The experience of the Relief in Aberdeen was a pitiful story. Apparently dissatisfaction had arisen over the latitudinarian utterances of the minister in the Gilcomston Chapel of Ease. A committee of managers from among those dissatisfied built a church; and an application, made from those worshipping there to be received into the Relief Church, was granted. The building was a proprietary church. Only the proprietors were allowed to vote at the election of a minister, when a Mr. Bryce was called. The majority of the congregation, however, preferred a different man, formed themselves into a separate congregation, and in turn applied to, and were received by, the Relief Presbytery. This action of the Presbytery was deeply resented by Mr. Bryce and his people, who withdrew from the Relief and joined the Established Church. The other charge, Shiprow, flourished under the first minister, but when in a few years he was succeeded by a wayward scholar whose ministry was characterised as "the bane of the Relief cause in Aberdeen," trouble soon developed. The Presbytery had to interfere, and the congregation disappeared from the Presbytery records. A third movement was made with more stability and survives as St. Paul's congregation.

In Dundee the case was even worse than Aberdeen. One abortive attempt followed another. There was need for church accommodation in the town. The congregation of Chapelshade was formed. But the first

minister, being dealt with by the Presbytery for following divisive courses, left the Relief Church, taking with him the building and the majority of the congregation into the Established Church. The minority was reformed into a congregation and became the West Port Church. The minister chosen soon found Relief bonds too restricted for him, and with the majority of the congregation which he had gathered he left the Relief Church, taking the building and people into the Independent fold. Once more, the faithful few purchased a building—a place of public entertainment—and fitted it up as a place of worship. Their first minister, Alexander Paterson, who was Lord Byron's tutor, was described by him as "a very serious, saturnine, but kind young man." On his early death he was succeeded by a minister who soon lost the support of many of his people, and they hived off to form a new congregation. What was left soon went to pieces and the church was sold. The dissident majority bought from the Episcopalians the Seagate Church, and had a minister settled over them, but under his successor the cause collapsed. There were a few survivors, however, and with these a new start was made. From this hardy stem two congregations claim descent, Dudhope and St. James, and both are thriving churches to-day.

In several instances there was even less of a struggle in the birth pangs ere the congregations expired. Curiously enough the most conspicuous cases of this took place just on the eve of the union with the Secession. Largs was formed and had a minister ordained in April, 1845. By July of the next year he resigned and joined the Established Church, and the congregation became extinct. Greenends arose out of a curious controversy over a settlement in the parish of Dron. The dissatisfied party applied to, and was accepted by, the Presbytery of Perth. They had a minister settled in January 1839. Under the threat of legal proceedings against the leader of the dissentients to recover expenses incurred in a protest against the parish settlement, and a promise that, if they would return to the Parish Church, the case would lapse, the pith was taken out of the Relief cause, and the minister resigned. A second was ordained in 1842, but, as the congregation could not support him, he resigned the following year. The cause struggled for a year or two with occasional supply at the expense of the Home Board and then was dissolved.

The most dramatic case was that of Climpy or Wilsontown. The proprietor of Climpy, Mr. George Crawford, on the 6th of August, 1808, wrote to the Relief Presbytery of Edinburgh, saying that in view of the flourishing prospects of the district, and the probability of a great accession of population, he was prepared to build a church there and would ask no interest for outlay until the seat rents of the congregation could provide for the minister a stipend of £130. The offer was accepted and a minister

inducted. Alas! Within a couple of years the Wilsontown Ironworks went into liquidation. The brilliant prospects faded. The people moved elsewhere. The minister resigned. The congregation dispersed. The church was left derelict.

In Haddington the Relief cause scarcely ever got on its feet. The first minister, the Rev. David Gellatly, was an erratic controversialist spirit, who was not long settled before he had wrecked the prospects of the cause. The first movements for a Relief congregation in Kirriemuir was little less fortunate and soon collapsed. Of Ford, Dr. Small sums up the story as "a record of struggle and disaster," which lasted over twenty years. At Banff the movement began as a protest against the doctrinal moderatism of the parish minister. A healthy zeal for the Gospel, which won the commendation of the Haldanes, sustained the cause for a time. But on a minister of "a mildly evangelical type" succeeding to the parish charge most of the members drifted back to the Established Church and the Relief Church passed into the hands of the Haldane Independents.

The case of the congregation at Mainsriddell is interesting, for after about 30 years' connection with the Relief, on the resignation of its third minister, its transferred its allegiance to the United Secession. A similar situation had arisen some ten years before at Coldingham. Over differences between the congregation and their only minister they withdrew from the Relief Church, and were received into the Burgher Church. The same was true of Kinghorn and Lilliesleaf.

The Relief Church made little impact on England. Three abortive attempts were made to start congregations in Newcastle. All three after a few years' existence either dispersed or passed out of connection with the Relief Church.

It is curious to notice the trend of circumstances that led to the disappearance of congregations from the ranks of the Relief Church. It seems pretty clear that frequently the collapse of congregations was due to the inadequacy of the stipend which was all they were able to offer, often as little as £80 a year or even less, and even of this they were in some cases far in arrears. No wonder ministers resigned and congregations dispersed. It is noticeable too that repeatedly a minister resigning was admitted to the ministry of the Established Church, sometimes along with his congregation. That suggests that his influence in that direction in some cases had undermined the loyalty of some of his flock towards Relief principles. A third feature is the apparent ease with which a congregation, dissatisfied with its ecclesiastical ties and the obligations these imposed could slip the knot and find admission to another denomination. There we

“ May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne’er so brave
And after they have shown their pride
 . . . a while, they glide
 Into the grave.”

II

Of the Churches which entered the union with the Secession five have become extinct.

Dovehill was the original Relief congregation in Glasgow. It arose out of a dispute between the Corporation of Glasgow and the Sessions and ministers of the city as to the election of a minister to the Wynd Church in 1761. Its history as a congregation is remarkable. In 1844, during the ministry of the Rev. William Lindsay, who was also the Professor of Exegetical Theology and Biblical Criticism, a new church was built for the congregation in Cathedral Street. In 1878, owing to underground railway operations at Queen Street Station, the building became unsafe, and a beautiful new church, after the style of Saint Chapelle in Paris, was built at Kelvingrove. When the College Church in Lynedoch Street, of which Dr. Reith was minister, was burnt, that congregation was united with Kelvingrove. But ere long the Kelvingrove Church in turn was burnt to the ground, was never rebuilt, and the congregation was dissolved.

The second Relief congregation in Glasgow was East Campbell Street. In the course of its third ministry a large section of the congregation, along with the minister, the Rev. William Ramage, petitioned, in 1856, to be disjoined and transferred to a new church erected in Berkeley Street. Within recent years the congregation which remained behind was united with Sydney Place, and the Church in East Campbell Street has become the centre of the Church’s work among the dwellers in Lodging Houses. Berkeley Street itself in the course of years united with Bath Street, a United Presbyterian congregation with a remarkable history. Both congregations, prior to their union, had suffered from a too common mistake—the planting of too many churches in a limited area. Not long after their union, on the occurrence of a vacancy, the congregation was dissolved.

In 1834 the Rev. David Crawford bought a church in Portobello from an abortive Secession congregation and started a Relief congregation there. In about ten years he retired. The congregation was dissolved and the building was sold to the Free Church on its forming in 1843. Auchtergaven died a natural death and so did Errol, before the eloquent preaching in the Parish Church of John Caird, later Principal of Glasgow University. Canal Street, Perth, also just faded away.

III

Quite a number of the Relief congregations sooner or later separated from the United Presbyterian Church. The union in 1875 of the United Presbyterian Churches in England with the Presbyterian Church in England (a body made up largely of the former Church of Scotland congregations in England which made common cause with the Free Church) involved four old Relief congregations. A fifth also, Berwick, eventually entered the English Presbyterian Church but only so lately as 1929. Two congregations, Auchtermuchty and Dunscore, cast in their lot with the United Free Church (Continuing) in the same year, 1929. Three congregations joined the Evangelical Union. One of them, Coupar Angus, did so after serious differences with their minister, who resigned and entered the Established Church, while the congregation joined the Evangelical Union, but though connected with it, strangely enough seems to have retained its old name. Dunning, resenting efforts made for their union with the former Burgher congregation, shut the door of the church on a minister deputed by his Presbytery to meet with them and reason with them. On application they were admitted to the Evangelical Union, but they never had another minister. Newburgh severed its connection over a similar attempt at Union. The failure is not to be wondered at, as the Relief congregation was itself the fruit of a split in the Burgher Church, and it was no easy task to heal such a breach. A similar disastrous result of efforts at union ensued at Crieff and the congregation joined the Independents.

IV

In contrast with those unsatisfactory results of efforts at union there is a long record of unions happily consummated. In them the Relief tradition has been fused with Burgher, Antiburgher and Free Church ideology and has been accepted and absorbed by the Church of Scotland of to-day. Jedburgh, the congregation of the younger Boston and the first to unite with Gillespie and his flock, is now united with the Burgher congregation and survives as Boston-Blackfriars. Colinsburgh, the congregation in the village where with Dunfermline and Jedburgh the first Relief Presbytery was constituted, has had a curious history. Under its second minister serious trouble took place in the congregation over the question of free communion. This question at the time was affecting several Relief congregations and led to the separation of Colinsburgh for a time from the Relief Presbytery. Ere long, however, a large section resolved to return to the Relief fold. They built themselves a church, and

after the death of the minister with whom the trouble had arisen, under a new ministry the congregation was reconstituted. In later days Lathones was united with it, and later still it was united with the Parish Church of Kilconquhar. A very full history of the village and congregation is from the pen of the Rev. Robert Dick, the tenth minister of the congregation.

It is not necessary or desirable to go into detail in the case of every union that has taken place. It will be sufficient to indicate the variety of types of unions which have been effected, and submit a few examples.

So far as I can discover there have only been two cases of the union of two originally Relief congregations. The one took place in Lanark; the other in Galashiels where the West Church and what began as a Church Extension charge of the United Presbyterian Church now form St. Cuthbert's. That there should be so few is not surprising. Except in large towns there seldom was more than a single Relief Church in a district. There were three cases where union was effected with Anti-Burgher congregations. There was Balfron where the Relief absorbed what survived of Secession elements. There the Secession in neither of its forms ever took root, but was a series of abortive attempts; parties at sixes and sevens; Burgher and Antiburgher; Auld Licht and New Licht, and Original Seceders in hopeless disagreement. Later the Relief congregation had united with it the Antiburgher congregation of Holm of Balfron and forms now the South Church there. Ceres and Earlston also joined with the local Antiburgher congregations. Later still Earlston joined with the Free Church congregation, Ceres with the Church of Scotland. There were rather more unions with Burgher congregations. It is not difficult to understand why. The Burghers were certainly not so narrow as the others and union was easier. Auchtermuchty, Stranraer, and Annan are cases in point. Three congregations—Kilmarnock, Kettle and Clackmannan are now united with the local Church of Scotland congregations.

The need for unions was due to decline in membership, and this decline in turn was chiefly due to two causes. For one thing to begin with, congregations were frequently drawn from very scattered areas, members travelling many miles on foot to a central place of worship. Such parent churches were seriously reduced when daughter churches hived off in new localities. For another reason, there was the serious decline in population in rural districts and country towns. Perhaps there is no more striking illustration of this than in the two congregations—Newlands or Mountain Cross (Relief) and West Linton (Burgher). Curiously enough they had somewhat similar origins. West Linton arose out of the intrusion of a minister, Mr. Findlater, into West Linton parish, and Mountain Cross out of the intrusion of this man's son into the neighbouring parish of Newlands. It is difficult to believe that there ever was need for a separate

parish of Newlands. It lies so remote and sequestered with but few dwellings, an "upland paradise," as one of its ministers called it on his return to it after a spell of work in the city, of woodland and moorland beauty in the lap of the hills by the riverside, with names so romantic—Mountain Cross, Romanno, La Mancha, Noblehouse—the home of the curlew and the lark, the sheep and the lambs, the shepherd and his dogs. Yet it is only within recent years that the little Relief congregation there had to be joined with Trinity, West Linton, bringing quickening traditions of great names like Rutherford to the home of James Mair, the Secession worthy.

V

Since the union of 1900 there have been many unions between what were originally Relief congregations and congregations of the Free Church. The number of these, particularly in small towns and country districts, raises the question whether in these places there ever really was any need for a Free Church and whether the proper course for those, who at the Disruption felt it their duty to withdraw from the Established Church, should not have been in small localities to throw in their lot with existing congregations which for similar reasons to their own had already left the State Church. Of course one remembers the fatal, but to my mind foolish, utterance of Dr. Chalmers, "we are not voluntaries," when it was only on the voluntary practice magnificently exhibited by his followers that his church had to depend for its existence. And that may explain the situation. But time brings its changes. One or two of these unions are worthy of notice. There is South College Street, one of the first and most noticeable of the Relief congregations and the earliest in Edinburgh. It had a remarkable succession of eloquent preachers—Baine, the first minister; James Struthers, whose preaching drew the elite of Edinburgh society to his church; John French and David McEwan. In 1885 College Street called to its ministry the Rev. Patrick W. Robertson, the first Free Church minister to be called to a United Presbyterian pulpit. In later days the changes of the population in the neighbourhood were such that a call for a reduction of the number of churches was imperative. So there was gathered into College Street the two Free Church congregations of Cowgate and Pleasance, a happy threefold union.

The second Relief congregation in Edinburgh was St. James' Place. It came into existence owing to the overcrowded condition of S. College Street. Though perched up on an out of the way corner, flanked by the back of the Roman Catholic church, the Theatre Royal, and the Register House, it became the home for many years of a strong, numerous and

devoted congregation, active in a great Home Mission work at its own doors. Latterly, owing to the decline of members, the congregation united with the Barony Free Church, which became the place of worship, and the old church was bought by the Roman Catholics.

Another interesting case of union with the Free Church is that of Newton Stewart. The Relief Church there never attained great strength, though to one of its ministers belongs the credit of bringing into notice the shepherd boy he found sitting on the moor with Latin and Greek books beside him, who rose to eminence, and to whom now the well-known monument stands on the high road through the moor where he herded sheep, Andrew Murray, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh. As the numbers of the Relief congregation declined a very harmonious union took place with the Free Church congregation under the genial ministry of the Rev. W. H. Brown Douglas. It speaks volumes for the spirit of his ministry that this union was ere long followed by another of the united charge with the congregation of the Church of Scotland.

Another union of a Relief congregation with a Free Church may be mentioned in view of the strange vagaries through which the Relief congregation passed. It is the case of Castle Douglas. This congregation came into existence in 1800. In 1817 when their second minister accepted a call to East Kilbride a stated ministry ceased for twenty years. In the meantime a Secession movement began, but proved abortive. The Relief building passed into the hands of the Reformed Presbyterians. The friends of the Relief cause, however, rallied and secured the building intended for the abortive Secession, and in 1837 the Relief congregation was revived. In due time a union took place with the Free Church which was started after the Disruption.

Unions with Free Churches have also taken place in the following cases: Auchtermuchty, Largs, Boston (Cupar), Wamphray, Beith, Campsie, Kilbarchan, Kelso, Ceres, Strathkinner, Port-William.

VI

It remains to say something of the congregations which still retain their independent existence. It would be superfluous to deal with every case; but the list of them is as follows:—Dunfermline (Gillespie), Bellshill, Blairlogie, Campbeltown (Long Row), Falkirk, Glasgow (Anderston), Irvine, St. Ninians, Auchterarder, Hamilton (Auchingramont), Strathaven (East), Biggar (Gillespie), Paisley (Canal Street), Saltcoats (Trinity), Musselburgh (Millhill), Dundee (Dudhope and St. James'), Dumfries

(Townhead), Waterbeck, East Kilbride, Dumbarton (Bridgend), Southend, Glasgow (John Street and Hutchesontown), Milngavie, Kilmarnock (King Street), Langholm, Glasgow (Tollcross and Greenhead), Aberdeen (St. Paul's), Greenock (Sir Michael Street), Paisley (Thread Street), Hawick (Allars), Bathgate, Ayr (Cathcart Street), Glasgow (Calton), Leith (Junction Road), Partick (Newton Place), Edinburgh (Arthur Street), Johnstone, Peebles, Kirriemuir, Brechin, Leven, Bonhill, Edinburgh (Bruntsfield), Hamilton (Brandon Street), Carluke, Leitholm, Rutherglen, Strathaven (West), Larkhall ; 53 in all.

Some of these deserve fuller notice. The original congregation which gathered round Gillespie in Dunfermline is still to the fore in a very healthy condition. Deprived at Gillespie's death of the original church by a piece of legal sharp practice, the congregation left its decaying walls with little regret for a new church. This in turn gave place to another building during the ministry of the Rev. Neil McMichael which they entered along with the remnants of Maygate United Secession congregation, which had been dissolved, and whose members associated themselves as members with Gillespie Church. McMichael became Professor of Systematic Theology in the Relief Divinity Hall. He was a man of quaint speech and caustic, though often unconscious humour. He punctuated his sentences with expletives—"perhaps," "of course," "ye ken," a specimen of which is preserved in his pungent criticism of a student's discourse on the labourers engaged at successive hours. "This discourse was prepared at the eleventh hour, perhaps, and it's not worth a penny, of course." He did yeoman service for the Church in connection with the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund.

Bellshill congregation was the first Relief Church in the West of Scotland. It had a chequered career in its early history, but remains a centre of vigorous and successful work. The building in which it worships has had its vicissitudes ; the spire was struck by lightning and had to be rebuilt. Two of its ministers stand out for mention, W. R. Thomson, a man of rare scholarship and virility of mind whose word carried much weight in the negotiations for union with the Church of Scotland, and J. R. Fleming, who became the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Alliance.

The Long Row Church, Campbeltown, as is detailed in Struthers' "History of the Relief Church" and given in brief in an article on that history among the Society's publications, was the centre of a critical stage in the life of the whole Relief Church and its stand for its principles, establishing the inherent rights of a Church of Christ. It still continues a power for religious freedom in Kintyre. Falkirk and Anderston, Glasgow, were recently dealt with in the Society's publications. Irvine still appears

among the congregations of the Church of Scotland as "the Relief Church." It has one unique page in its history. Its second minister, the Rev. Hugh White, a young man of popular preaching gifts, early in his ministry came in contact with Elizabeth Simpson (Mrs. Buchan), and was so flattered by her adulation that he became infatuated with her ideas and fell a prey to her delusions. She gave herself out to be the third person in the Godhead and personified the woman clothed with the sun and moon (Rev. xii), and had brought forth the Man Child in the person of the Rev. Hugh White ! When this nonsense found its place in his preaching the matter was brought before the Presbytery and he was deposed. This extraordinary farrago won the adherence of a number of people throughout Scotland. The sect were called the Buchanites. Expelled from Irvine by the public authorities they migrated to Dumfries, and after the death of Mrs. Buchan they gradually disappeared. ("The Buchanites," by Joseph Train.)

In Strathaven there are still two healthy congregations which represent the original Relief Church there. When the Rev. John French, after a very successful ministry of thirteen years, left Strathaven for South College Street, Edinburgh, there was a strong minority against the minister who was called to succeed him. This minority, on the plea that the congregation was too large and the church too small, applied to be congregated as a second charge, and no objection being offered, the crave was granted; hence the two congregations.

In Paisley, as in Strathaven, there survive two Relief congregations. Both have had ministers who have left a decided mark on the life of the Church in Scotland. The first minister in Canal Street was Patrick Hutchison who, while in his earlier charge of St. Ninian's, Stirling, was the author of the ablest defence and exposition of the Relief principles (see the Appendix to Struthers' History). In later days among his successors was Dr. George C. Hutton, the most redoubtable champion of Disestablishment, as cogent in his arguments as he was humorous in their statement. Thread Street, the younger congregation, formed like that in Strathaven, to relieve the overcrowding of the existing church, had for its first minister the Rev. James Thomson. When the Relief Church found it necessary to set up a theological Hall of their own, Thomson was appointed Professor, and Paisley for the time was the seat of the College. His successor was William McDougal, an irrepressible wit and an early example of ecumenical brotherliness and not least towards the brethren of the Established Church. His successor, the Rev. Andrew Fleming, was one of the very first to preach sermons for children, which he did most felicitously.

Among rural charges that survive Waterbeck has a distinguished place. It has a reputation for the gift of calling young men of special ability.

It was not so at the outset. It was with some difficulty it got on its feet. Its first three calls were declined. It got into strained relations with the Presbytery over a preacher's fee, objecting to a charge of £3 for travelling expenses, "as he had no horse." At last there was a settlement, but the ministry ended tragically. The minister, annoyed by a female member and being of a high-strung nature, went out of his mind and made away with himself. Among its later ministers were Armstrong Black, the poetic spirit, and Adam Welch, but lately deceased, the most independent and thorough Hebrew authority of our day. Dumbarton, Bridgend, has a similar reputation for the distinguished preachers who have begun their ministry in its pulpit. It had its own struggles to begin with. It was drawn from a widely scattered area, and at one stage, under its second minister, whose health seems to have given way under the strain, it seemed as if on the verge of a break-up. From that day, however, it began to revive and is now one of the strongest churches in the town.

Two of the Edinburgh congregations still survive. The one is now Bruntsfield Church. The congregation began in a church purchased by six men, in the Cowgate. It had as its first minister a quaint and eccentric character, the Rev. James Scott, locally known as "Scottie o' the Coogate." Of him it is told that one Sabbath he addressed his people thus: "Friends, I am going to preach to you on Job under four heads: firstly, Job was a very patient man; secondly, he was a very sairly tried man; thirdly, Job never preached in the Cowgate; fourthly, if he had, Heaven help his patience." It was not an easy field, and not only so, but there were troubles between the congregation and the six proprietors. They on the strength of their pecuniary interests in the building interfered with the spiritual rights of the people, which led to the secession of a large proportion (889 members) of them to form what became the other Relief congregation which survives, namely Arthur Street. On this the proprietors sold the building, but the remanent members held together, worshipped in the Freemasons Hall, Niddrie Street, until a church was built for them in Bread Street. There they remained till 1883 when they removed to the present place of worship in Leamington Terrace. Those who withdrew from the Cowgate Church, after a stormy passage, ultimately settled in what is now the Pleasance Church in Arthur Street. Its minister for a time was the Rev. Robert Gemmell whose name was notorious for his long-drawn out conflict with the Presbytery. Latterly the congregation has been closely associated with mission work in the district carried on first by the Missionary Society of the Students' of the United Presbyterian Hall, in which they were mightily encouraged by their beloved Principal, John Cairns; and later with the New College Settlement, when the Rev.

Harry Miller became at once Warden of the Settlement and minister of the congregation.

King Street Church, Kilmarnock, is known locally as the Relief Kirk. Standing in the main street of the town with a record of outstanding ministries, it holds a commanding position. The congregation took its rise over a disputed settlement in the neighbouring parish of Riccarton. Its first location was a humble building in the parish, and at the outset it had a struggle for existence. But in the ministry of the Rev. Wm. McDougal, the present church was built, and is said to have been the first dissenting church in Scotland to have a bell and the second which had a steeple.

VII

Looking back over this story of nearly a hundred years, it may be worth while to recall what brought about the Relief movement. It took its first shape in Thomas Gillespie's stand. But there was more in it than that. In each case these congregations were made up of people, hungry souls, desirous of soul-satisfying evangelical preaching. As one of the congregations which still survives (Allars, Hawick) naively put it: "they were under the necessity," they said, "of opening communication either with the present establishment or with such dissenting societies as were within reach, the opposing alternative being to connect themselves with no church at all. Some religions, they held, were too lax in their discipline, and others were cramped in ceremonies which they set forth as terms of communion, making their principles too narrow for those of more enlarged views to join with. As for the Relief, though they might not keep exactly to the old paths, they at least held forth the celebrated truths of the gospel with candour and moderation." That is at least better than the commendation once given by a Free Church minister to a U.P. stranger who had taken a service for him. "Yes," he said, "I am glad of this fellowship, for I think that, upon the whole, the U.P.'s are doing as much good as the Established Church who are doing no good at all."

Those who appreciate the essential value of the Relief testimony are are not perturbed by the gradual disappearance of what were originally Relief congregations. Those which still remain retain many of the features peculiar to their earlier days, and which in modified form have been adopted in charges made up of Relief and other elements, or even in the practice of the Church as a whole. The Relief congregations have their own constitutions. They hold their own property. They deal with their financial affairs through a body of managers. They prepay the stipend. They have long since ceased to give the minister a bond for its payment.

Such a bond was forcible on default by recourse to court, but an aggrieved victim was counselled not to take advantage of his right without consulting his Presbytery (Small, II, 460). The cardinal interests for which their fathers felt it their duty to take their stand beside Gillespie have been recognised as basal truths and are embodied in the terms of the successive unions of those who have joined with them. The Seceders, the Free Church, the Established Church have each in turn given their adherence to the principles for which the Relief at first stood alone. It is a great case of a little leaven leavening the whole lump until the whole was leaven. These prevail and are at the heart of the constitution of the Church of Scotland. If larger unions still are to follow, as undoubtedly they will, these things will find their commanding place in any negotiations: the equal right of all the members of a church as part of the body of Christ to a voice in the choice of its ministry and open communion at the Communion Table which is the Table of no sect, but is the Table of the Lord with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

